

# HIT

## COMICS

NOVEMBER  
No. 61



10¢

Introducing  
**JEB RIVERS**

IN A SIZZLING TALE  
OF THE  
TURBULENT MISSISSIPPI  
IN ITS HEYDAY!







WEB COMIC  
UNIVERSE.COM



*-Hi Fellows! The NEW*

# LIONEL TRAINS

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**SEE THE NEW  
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and the marvelous  
DIESEL SWITCHER**

Boy!—I'll bet you and dad are planning a new and bigger LIONEL Railroad for this Christmas! Lots of new LIONEL locos, cars, and accessories to choose from! You know, boys, nobody but LIONEL gives you true railroad realism. The new 1949 catalog tells all about the famous LIONEL smoke puffing locos, the built-in real R.R. whistles, and the sensational Lionel Electronic Railroad.

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I enclose 10c. Please send me the new 40-page,  
full-color Lionel Train Catalog for 1949.

Name

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# REEB RIVERS

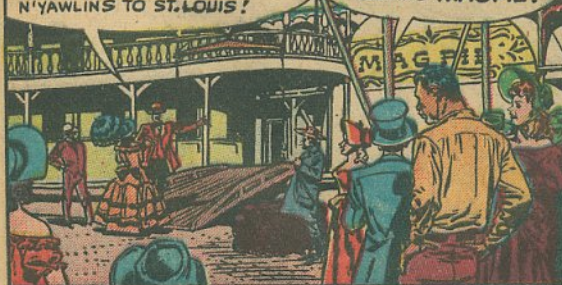


**STEAM'S UP! ALL ABOARD FOR ADVENTURE!**  
A JOURNEY THROUGH THE GREAT DAYS OF THE OLD MISSISSIPPI RIVER, WHEN AMERICA'S FATHER OF WATERS KNEW EXCITEMENT IN EVERY RIPLE! PADDLE WHEELS WHIRL! GUNS ROAR! IT'S DO OR DIE, SINK OR SAIL, VICTORY OR OBLIVION FOR JEB RIVERS AND HIS YOUNG PARTNER **CATFISH!**

## The RIVER FRONT OF OLD NEW ORLEANS AND...WHAT'S THIS?

LADDEEZ AND GENTLEMEN! IN FIFTEEN MINUTES THE RACE WILL START UP RIVER... **ONE THOUSAND MILES AGAINST THE CURRENT...** FOR A NEW RECORD FROM N'YAWLINS TO ST. LOUIS!

KEERECT! CAP'N LUCIUS PELHAM'S UPSTART EXPERIMENTAL CRAFT **PARAGON** CHALLENGES CAP'N TYBURN'S RECORD-HOLDING **MAGPIE!**



WHO'LL BET ON THE PARAGON? I OFFER THREE TO ONE ON THE MAGPIE!

NO BETS, MISTER, BUT I'M OVERDUE IN ST. LOUIS AND WANT TO BUY PASSAGE ON ONE OF THE BOATS!





SORRY, FRIEND, BUT NOBODY'S ALLOWED ON EITHER CRAFT WITHOUT VENTURING MONEY ON ITS CHANCES! THE MAGGIE'S FULL UP... BUT PERHAPS CAPTAIN PELHAM HERE HAS ROOM FOR ONE MORE?

CAPTAIN PELHAM, I'M JEB RIVERS! SINCE IT'S NECESSARY, I'LL BET EVERYTHING I HAVE ABOVE MY PASSAGE MONEY THAT YOUR PARAGON WINS!

I'LL ACCOMMODATE THE GENTLEMAN! THREE TO ONE, AND JUDGE FONTAINE OF NEW ORLEANS WILL HOLD STAKES FOR US!

YOU'RE THE LAST PASSENGER I CAN TAKE, MR. RIVERS! BRING YOUR LUGGAGE!



I HAVEN'T ANY LUGGAGE, CAPTAIN! SO LET ME CARRY MY YOUNG PARTNER, CATFISH! HE GOES WHEREVER I GO!

LIVE WEIGHT'S NO HEAVIER THAN DEAD WEIGHT! ABOARD, THEN, BOTH OF YOU!



I SAIL WITH THE MAGGIE, LIKE YOU! IN ST. LOUIS I SETTLE THE WAGER, AND MAY THE BEST BOAT WIN, SIR!

THANKS, JUDGE, THE MAGGIE WILL! SEE YOU ABOARD AFTER I'VE SPOKEN TO MR. GOOLER YONDER!



GOOLER, I BET THE MONEY YOU GAVE ME ON THE MAGGIE! BUT I STILL DON'T SEE WHY YOU'RE SAILING ON THE PARAGON WHEN YOU BET AGAINST HER!

OF COURSE YOU DON'T SEE, YOU FOOL! I SAIL ON HER TO MAKE SURE SHE LOSES!

SINCE WE'RE TO BE FELLOW PASSENGERS ON THIS MEMORABLE JOURNEY, PERMIT ME...MY NAME IS GOOLER!

I'M JEB RIVERS, AT YOUR SERVICE! AND THIS IS CAT-FISH!



THE LAST PASSENGERS ARE ABOARD, THE GANGPLANKS LIFT, AND ...

THEY'RE OFF! NECK AND NECK UP THE RIVER ... WHAT A PICTURE!





IT'LL BE THREE DAYS AT LEAST BEFORE WE REACH ST. LOUIS! PERHAPS WE COULD PASS THE TIME IN PLAYING CARDS IN A FRIENDLY FASHION ...

SORRY, MR. GOOLER, MY EXTRA CASH WENT FOR A BET ON THE PARAGON TO GET MY PLACE ABOARD HER! AND I'M ANXIOUS TO SEE CAPTAIN PELHAM... HE WENT ALOFT TO THE PILOT HOUSE.



AHOY, ENGINES! WE'RE IN THE CHANNEL ... FULL STEAM STARBOARD AND LARBOARD! I'LL TRY TO BEAT THE MAGPIE TO SIX MILE POINT!

I'M GOING BELOW, MARNIE! I CAN DEPEND ON YOU TO GET US AN EARLY LEAD!



AH, MR. GOOLER! YOU'RE ABOARD MY CRAFT ... WHICH MEANS YOU WAGERED ON HER TO WIN!

NATURALLY, CAPTAIN! AND I'M LOOKING FOR ANOTHER FRIENDLY WAGER ... CARDS, THIS TIME!



IMPOSSIBLE! MY LAST DOLLAR WENT INTO PERFECTING THE PARAGON! I HOPE TO ADVANCE THE WHOLE STEAM-BOATING BUSINESS BY HER PERFORMANCE!

I WAS GOING TO SUGGEST, CAPTAIN, THAT I'D BE GLAD TO HELP YOUR RACE IN ANY WAY I COULD!



I UNDERSTAND THE ENGINE JOB ... LIKE-WISE PILOTING ... KNOW EVERY FOOT OF THE RIVER!

THANKS, MR. RIVERS, BUT MY YOUNG 'UN, MARNIE, IS AT THE WHEEL NOW! AND MARNIE IS AS GOOD A PILOT AS THE RIVER BOASTS!



STILL JUST A KID, IS MARNIE! BUT PILOTS LIKE A VETERAN ... BRAVE, COOL, SMART!

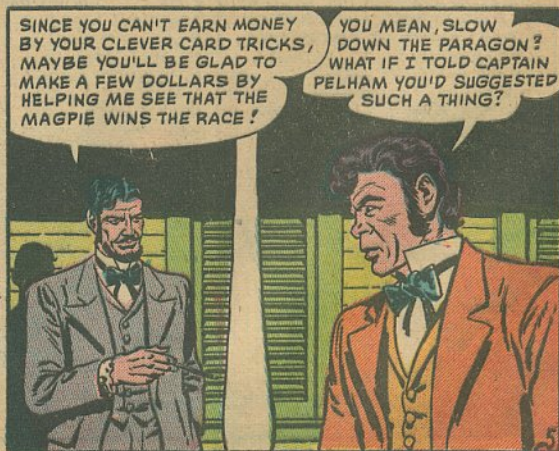
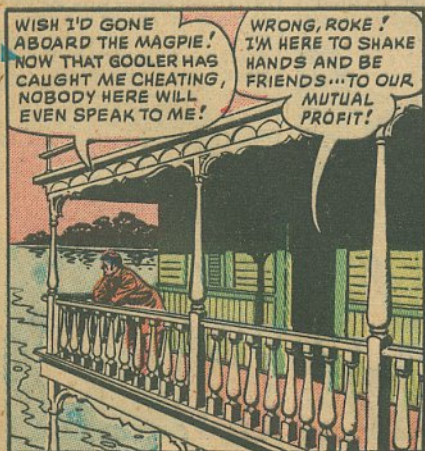
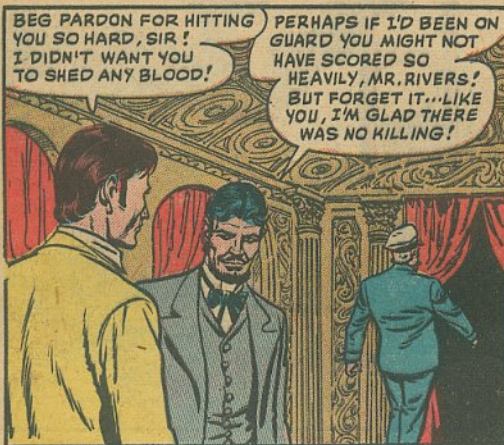
THIS KID OF THE SKIPPER'S SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD FELLER! I'LL GO UP THERE AND MAKE FRIENDS!











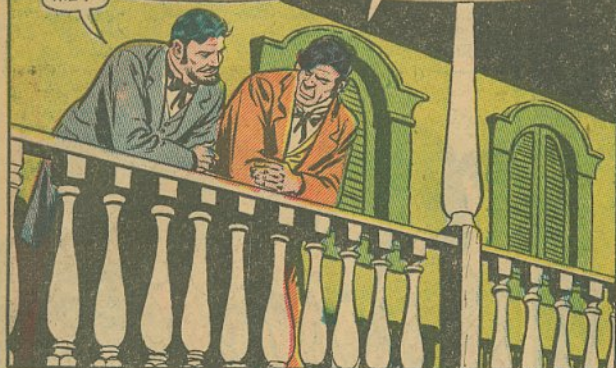


IN THAT CASE, HE'D CALL YOU A LIAR... SAY YOU WERE MAKING UP STORIES TO GET EVEN WITH ME!

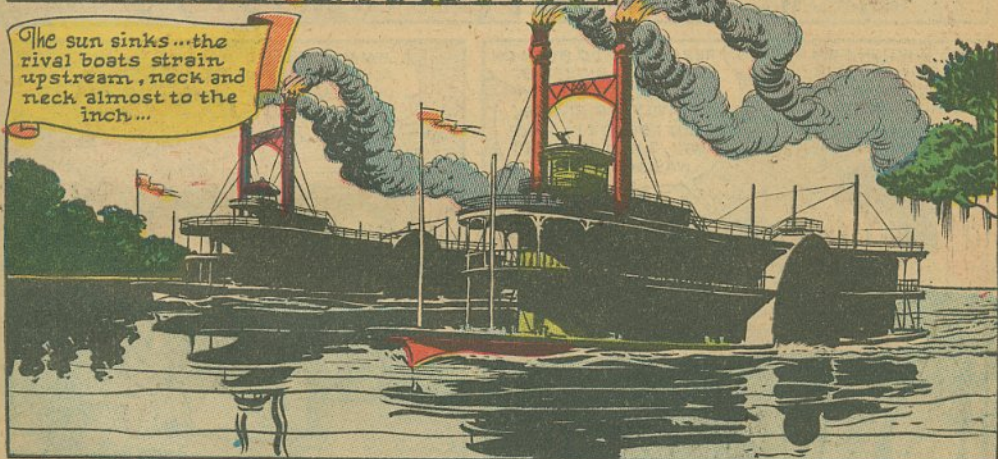
YOU LEAVE ME NO ARGUMENTS, GOOLER! HOW DO WE OPERATE?

WELL, WHEN EVENING FALLS AND CAPTAIN PELHAM GOES TO THE PILOT HOUSE TO TAKE THE WHEEL, WE... PST, PST, PST...

I UNDERSTAND!



The sun sinks...the rival boats strain upstream, neck and neck almost to the inch...



GO BELOW AND GET A GOOD REST, MARNIE! YOU'VE DONE FAMOUSLY FOR THE START OF THE RACE!

I'LL SEND YOU UP A MUG OF HOT COFFEE, FATHER!



OH, CATFISH!

DON'T PAY HER NO MIND, JEB! IT'S CAP'N PELHAM'S GAL CHILD, MARNIE, TRYIN' TO ACT LIKE SHE'S AS GOOD AS US MEN!



IS CATFISH ANGRY WITH ME? I WAS GOING TO LET HIM TAKE SOME COFFEE UP TO MY FATHER... THOUGHT ANY BOY WOULD LIKE TO VISIT THE PILOT HOUSE!

GIVE CATFISH A FEW YEARS AND MAYBE LADIES WON'T EMBARRASS HIM, MISS MARNIE! MY NAME'S JEB RIVERS... PERHAPS YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO TAKE THE COFFEE TO CAPTAIN PELHAM!





YOUR FATHER HAS DESIGNED A SPLENDID CRAFT, MISS MARNIE! AND YOU MUST BE A PILOT OF PILOTS TO BEGIN THE RACE SO WELL!

FLATTERER! I'M ONLY THE PRODUCT OF FATHER'S TIRELESS AND INTELLIGENT TEACHING!



FATHER TOLD ME HOW YOU HELPED HIM HANDLE A CROOKED GAMBLER TODAY, MR. RIVERS! LET ME ADD MY THANKS TO HIS... AND HERE'S THE COFFEE YOU SAID YOU'D TAKE TO HIM!

SHE'S JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHER GALS! ONE LOOK AT JEB AND SHE STARTS MAKIN' EYES!

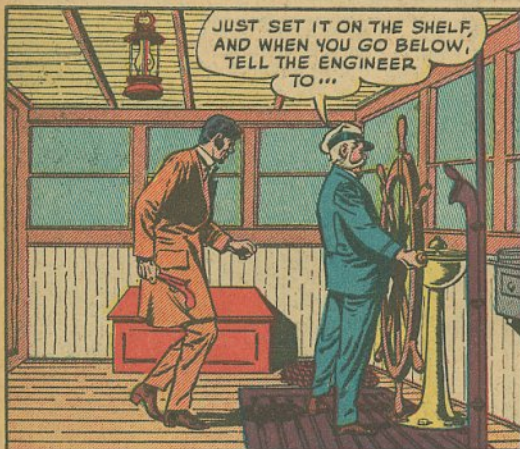


MEANWHILE, IN THE PILOT HOUSE...

WHO'S THAT? MARNIE? HOPE YOU BROUGHT COFFEE... I'LL NEED IT TONIGHT!



JUST SET IT ON THE SHELF, AND WHEN YOU GO BELOW, TELL THE ENGINEER TO...



IT WAS TOO EASY!



NOW TO LASH THE WHEEL AND RUN THIS TUB STRAIGHT TOWARD SHORE AND OUT OF THE RACE!

AHOY, CAPTAIN PELHAM! YOUR DAUGHTER ASKED ME TO BRING YOU THIS...



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

I'LL HAVE TO SHOOT YOU TO SILENCE YOUR WAGGING TONGUE!





NO SHOOTING... THAT'S UNFRIENDLY! HERE... TASTE THE COFFEE!



YAAAA!

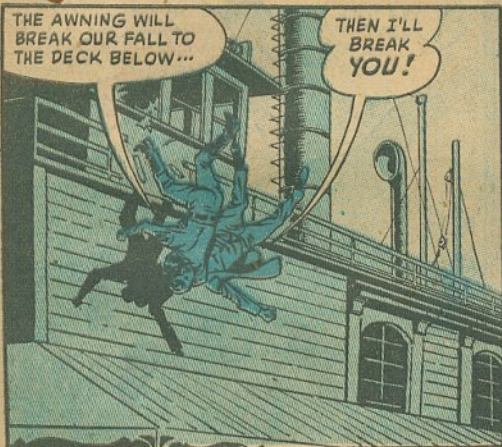
OUT YOU GO!

IF I GO, YOU GO WITH ME!



THE AWNING WILL BREAK OUR FALL TO THE DECK BELOW...

THEN I'LL BREAK YOU!



WHO... WHAT...

MY PARTNER JEB'S BATTLIN' WITH SOMEBODY! WHICH IS JUST TOO BAD FOR THE SOMEBODY!



OWW!

HOORAY FOR JEB! YOU POPPED HIM PLUMB IN THE PIE-GRABBER!



HE'S FALLING INTO THE RIVER! QUICK, HELP HIM!

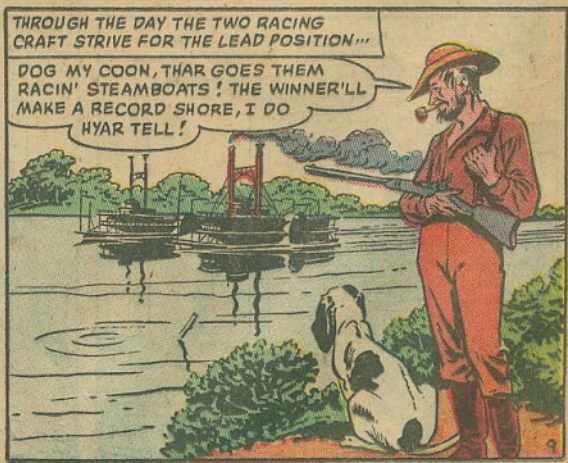
LET HIM GO, HE DESERVES IT! HE TRIED TO WRECK THE PARAGON!



WE HAVE ONLY SECONDS TO PUT THINGS RIGHT!

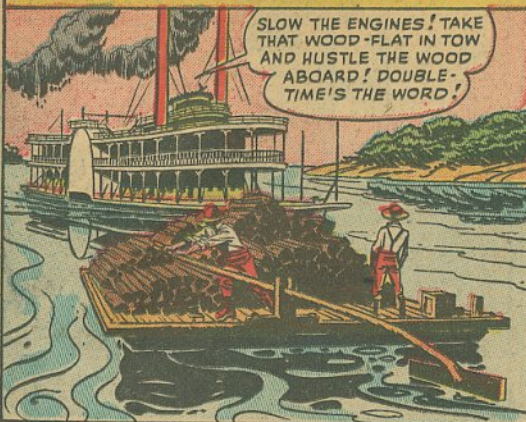








FRESH FUEL IS HURRIED TO THE STRIVING ENGINES...



SLOW THE ENGINES! TAKE THAT WOOD-FLAT IN TOW AND HUSTLE THE WOOD ABOARD! DOUBLE-TIME'S THE WORD!

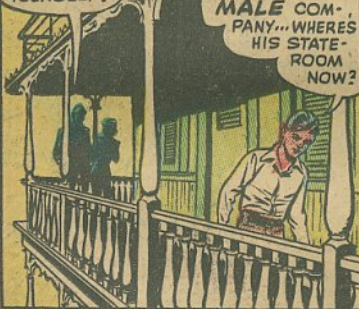
WE'LL PASS VICKSBURG BEFORE SUNDOWN... GET TO MEMPHIS BY MIDNIGHT AND REACH CAIRO BY EVENING OF OUR THIRD DAY!

THE NEXT TRY AT WRECKING THIS CURSED SPEED SCOW MUST **NOT** FAIL! AND IN MY STATEROOM I HAVE...



MISS MARNIE, IT WAS AN HONOR TO ME TO SHARE THE PILOTING JOB WITH **RIVER ARTISTS** LIKE YOUR FATHER AND YOURSELF!

HUNKERS! THERE HE GOES, TALKIN' POLITE TO A GAL! ME, I'M GONNA GO LOOK UP MR. GOOLER... HE'S **MALE COM-PANY**... WHERE'S HIS STATE-ROOM NOW?



HERE IT IS... AND INSIDE IS... **WHAT IS INSIDE?**



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, YOU MISERABLE LITTLE SNEAKING SPY?

I'M LOOKIN' AT WHAT YOU GOT THERE... **DYNAMITE AND FUSE!** YOU'RE GOIN' TO BLOW UP THE BOAT, HUH?



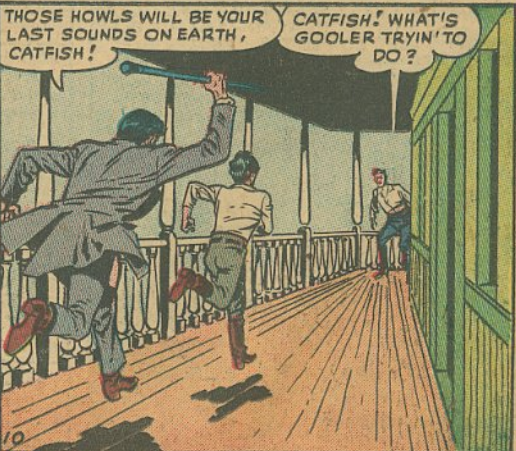
SHUT UP, OR I'LL SMASH YOU TO POWDER!

JEB! JEB! **HELP!**



THOSE HOWLS WILL BE YOUR LAST SOUNDS ON EARTH, CATFISH!

CATFISH! WHAT'S GOOLER TRYIN' TO DO?





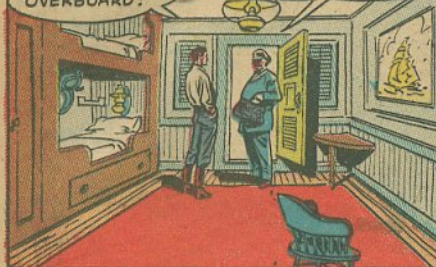




But ANOTHER NIGHT, ANOTHER DAY AND ANOTHER NIGHT HAVE PASSED, WHEN...

THE HANDS SAY THAT THEY'VE SEARCHED EVERY NOOK AND CORNER AND GOOLER CAN'T BE FOUND! PERHAPS HE WENT OVERBOARD!

I HOPE SO, MR. RIVERS! AS TO THIS BAGFUL OF DYNAMITE HE BROUGHT ABOARD, HOW ABOUT KEEPING IT SAFE HERE IN YOUR STATEROOM?



THERE! IT'S LOCKED IN, AND ONLY CATFISH AND I HAVE KEYS! AND THE RACE IS NEARLY OVER!

THE PARAGON IS SEVERAL MILES AHEAD OF THE MAGPIE! WE'LL BE AT THE PIER IN ST. LOUIS BEFORE SUNDOWN! I'LL GO RELIEVE MARNIE AT THE WHEEL!



But as Jeb and Captain Pelham depart...

THEY SEARCHED EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY... EXCEPT THIS STATEROOM OF THE FOOLS THEY TRUSTED!



THEY EVEN LEFT MY DYNAMITE HANDY FOR MY USE!

RIGHT, GOOLER! AND THEY LEFT ME TO SEE HOW QUICK YOU GOT TO IT!



THIS TIME I'LL FINISH YOU PERMANENTLY, YOU NOSEY LITTLE IMP!

JEB!  
JEB!



HE WAS HIDIN' IN OUR STATEROOM, JEB! THE ONLY PLACE WE DIDN'T LOOK!

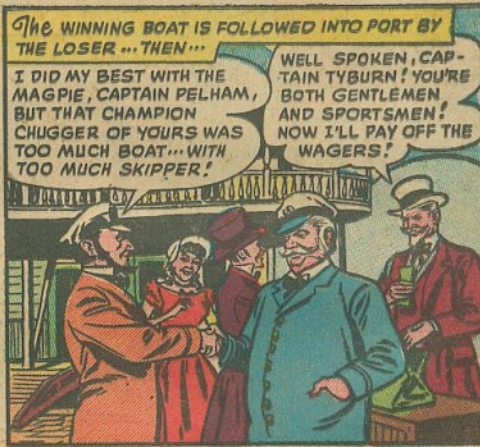
NOW WE CAN STOP LOOKING AND START HAMMERING!



HERE, RIVERS, TAKE THIS SAWED-OFF SPY OF YOURS OFF MY HANDS!

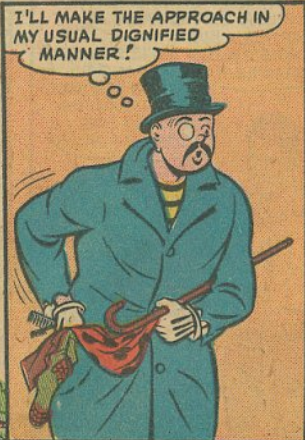




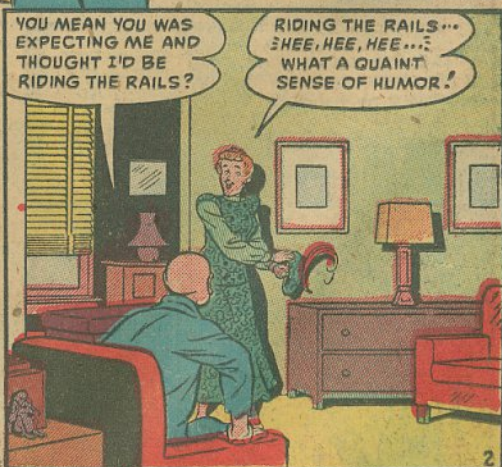
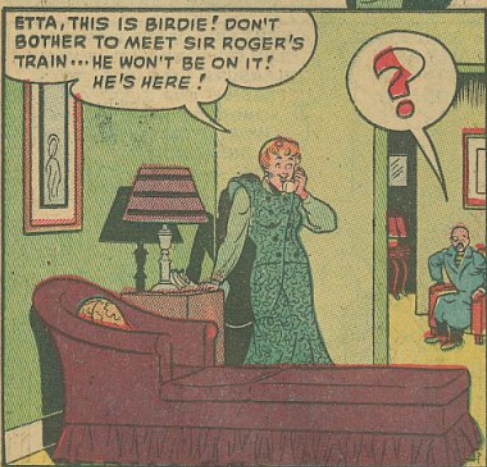
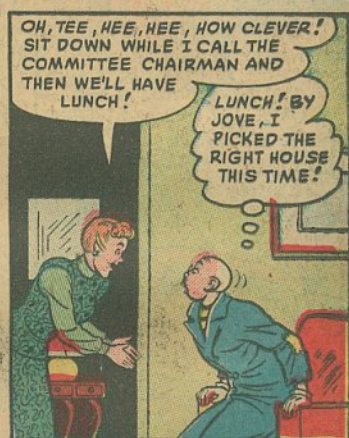
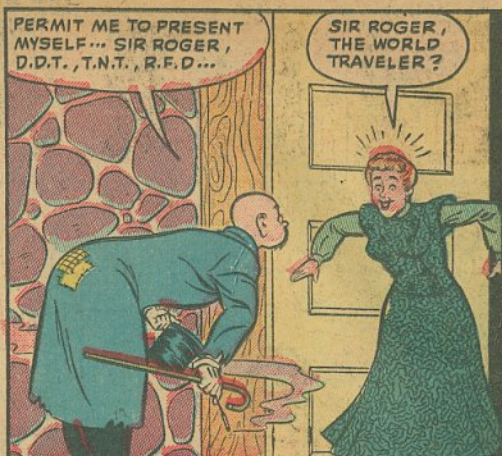
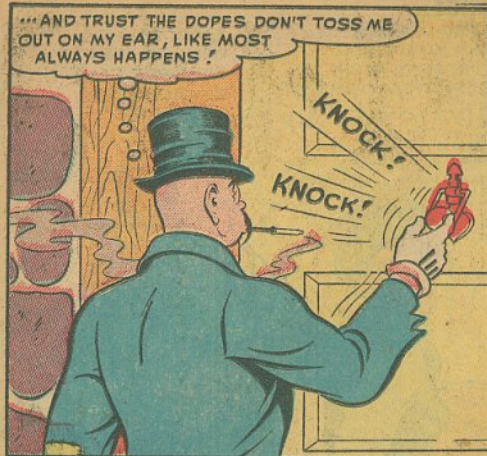




# SIR ROGER









THE GIRLS ARE  
JUST GOING TO  
LOVE YOU, SIR  
ROGER!

MADAM, THAT'S  
FLATTERING TO MY  
EGO, BUT IT'S MY  
STOMACH THAT'S  
YAPPING FOR  
ATTENTION! HOW  
ABOUT CHOW?

WE'RE LEAVING RIGHT  
THIS MINUTE FOR  
LUNCHEON AT THE  
TIDBIT TEAROOM!

TEAROOM? OH,  
WELL, I GUESS  
BEGGARS CAN'T  
BE CHOOSERS!  
LET'S GO!

WILL YOU  
SAY A FEW  
WORDS  
BEFORE  
WE EAT?

FEW AS POSSIBLE,  
EGAD, UNTIL I  
CONSUME SOME  
VICTUALS AND  
GET MY STRENGTH  
BACK!

WELL, HERE  
WE ARE!

FOOD AT  
LAST!  
SLOBBER!  
SLURP!

FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW,  
FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD  
FELLOW...

AWK!  
WHAT'S  
ALL THE  
NOISE?

TIDBIT  
TEAROOM

FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD  
FELLLOWWWW!  
SIR RO-AWW-GER,  
WELCOME TO YOU!

THEY'RE  
SINGIN' THAT  
FOR ME!  
GULP! AT  
LAST, MY  
FAME HAS  
SPREAD!  
SNIFF!

MY GENIUS HAS  
FINALLY BEEN  
RECOGNIZED!  
SOB!

MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN'S  
CLUB OF SCATVILLE, IT IS MY  
PLEASURE TEE, HEE! TO  
PRESENT OUR GUEST OF  
HONOR, THE FAMOUS  
WORLD TRAVELER,  
SIR ROGER!

HONK!



LADIES, THIS WELCOME HAS TOUCHED MY HEARTSTRINGS! SOB! BUT MY BACKBONE IS LIKEWISE TOUCHING MY RIBS! LET'S EAT!

SNIFF!

HA, HA!  
WHAT A  
WIT!

ADORABLY  
ORIGINAL!

SIGH!  
HE'S  
DARLING!



HOW DO YOU DO MOST  
OF YOUR TRAVELLING?

OH, SHANKS'  
MARE! GLOB!  
MUNCH!  
GOBBLE!



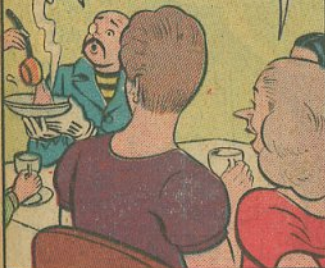
AND THAT  
BUILDS UP  
MY APPETITE!  
HOW ABOUT  
SOME MORE  
SLUMGULLION?

HEE, HEE! HE'S  
A RIOT!

I LOVE  
ECCENTRIC  
PEOPLE!

WHEN YOU FINISH  
EATING, SIR ROGER...  
IF YOU EVER DO...  
WE'LL GO DIRECTLY  
TO THE WOMEN'S  
CLUB FOR YOUR  
LECTURE!

GULP!  
SLUP!



YOU WANT I SHOULD TALK  
ABOUT MY TRAVELS?  
MADAM, I WILL BE GLAD  
TO OBLIGE IN PAYMENT  
FOR SUCH A SNAZZY  
HAND-OUT!



MEANWHILE...

HMM! SOMEBODY WAS  
SUPPOSED TO MEET ME  
HERE, BUT I'VE WAITED  
OVER AN HOUR AND  
NO ONE'S SHOWN  
UP!



MY LECTURE AT THE WOMEN'S CLUB  
WAS SCHEDULED FOR TWO O'CLOCK  
AND IT'S PAST THAT TIME ALREADY.  
I'D BETTER TAKE A TAXI!

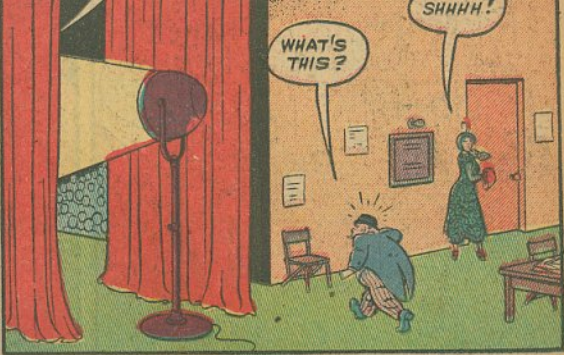




IF I WEREN'T GETTING A HUNDRED SMACKERS FOR THIS APPEARANCE, I WOULDN'T SHOW UP! I'M NOT USED TO BEING IGNORED!



...AND I'VE BEEN ASKED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT MY TRAVELS, SO HERE GOES!



...SOMETIMES I SLEEP IN HAYSTACKS AND SOME-TIMES IN FLOPHOUSES AND ...

MEN AREN'T ALLOWED IN THIS AUDIENCE ... THIS IS THE WOMEN'S CLUB! AND GO QUIETLY ... SIR ROGER'S SPEAKING!

HUH?



HE'S NOT SIR ROGER! I'M SIR ROGER!

HE'S SIR ROGER!



THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! I AM SIR ROGER DE FLOOP, WORLD TRAVELER AND LECTURER, AND I CAN PROVE IT BY THIS ENGRAVED MEDAL FROM THE NATIONAL TRAVELER'S ASSOCIATION!

GOOD GRACIOUS! IT'S TRUE! THEN WHO'S HE?



HE'S AN IMPOSTOR!

AN IMPOSTOR? AND HE ATE OUR FOOD!

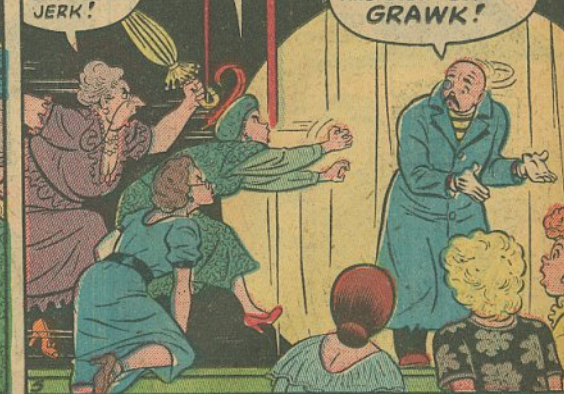
SOMETIMES I LIFT MY GRUB ...



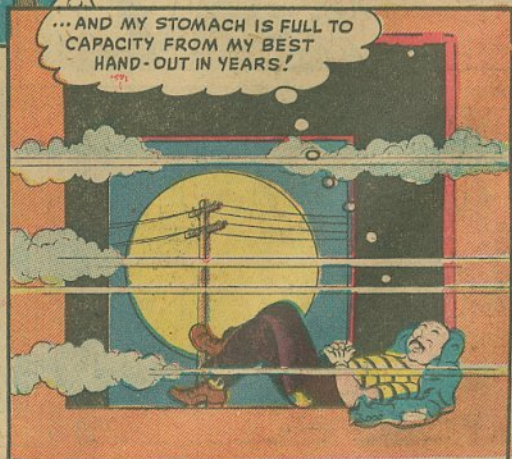
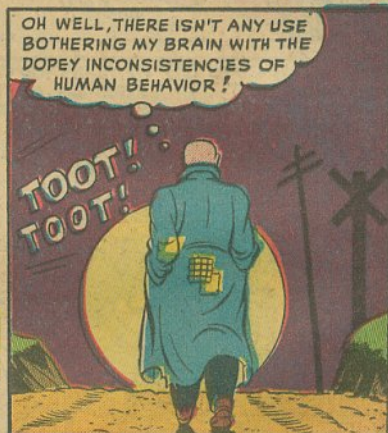
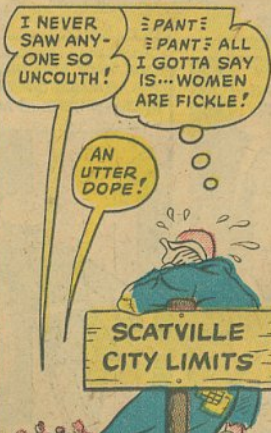
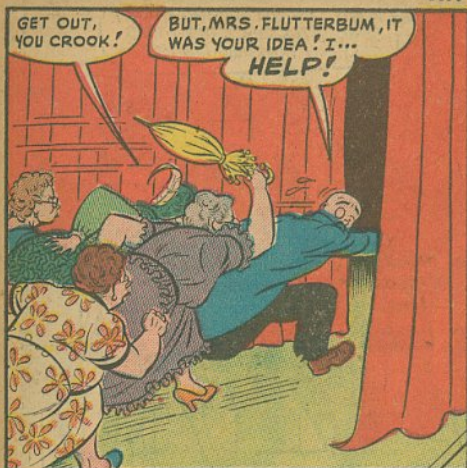
THIEF! DOUBLE-CROSSER! JERK!

WRETCH!

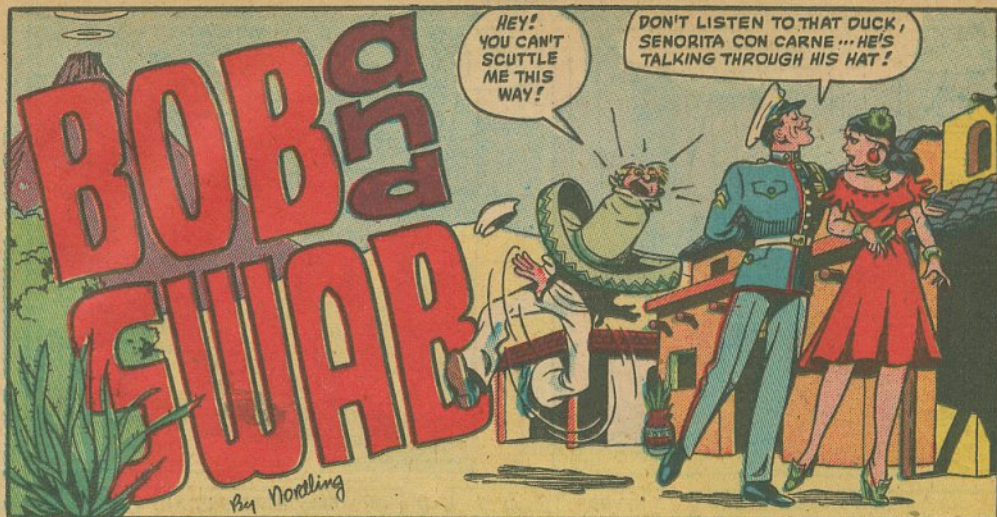
SOMETIMES I'M CHASED BY DOGS AND EVEN PEOPLE ... GRAWK!



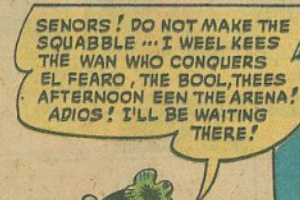
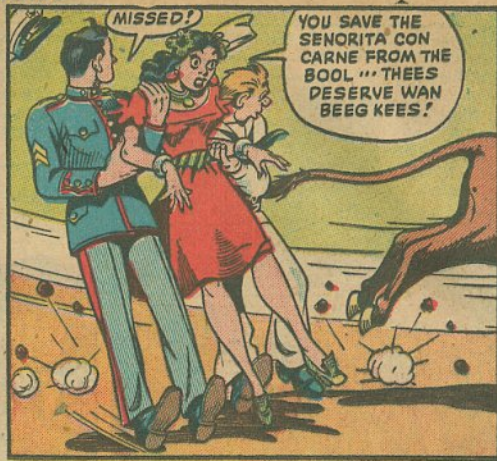










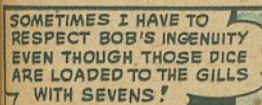


## 500 PESO PRIZE! GRAND AMATEUR TOREADOR CONTEST

Against  
EL  
FEARO



REGISTER  
NOW AT  
BRINALL  
TH III



ARENA  
POR LO  
TORO



TAKE  
YOUR  
PICK,  
BALLOON  
PANTS!

CARAMBA! THEES AMERICANO EES A WEEZARD OF THE CRAPS!





SEÑORS ... SEÑORITAS! PRESENTEING  
LOS TOREADORES ROBERTO AND SWABERTO  
FACING THE TERRIBLE BOOL, EL  
FEARO!

THERE'S  
SEÑORITA  
CON CARNE  
WAVING AT  
US!

WHEN I WAVE THIS  
CHLOROFORM UNDER  
EL FEARO'S NOSE, HE'LL  
BLACK OUT LIKE A FOG  
AND I'LL BE KISSING  
CON CARNE!

ULP!  
HERE COMES  
STEAK ON  
THE HOOF!

I'D RATHER HAVE MINE  
ON A PLATE ... OOPS!

PHEW!

HEY!  
WATCH  
OUT!

YAWN! I FEEL  
BUNK HAPPY ...  
YAWN!

WAKE UP, MATE,  
OR IT'S TAPS FOR  
YOU!

MUSTN'T  
SLEEP ...  
ZZZZ!

MEESED  
HEEM!

BRAVO! BRAVO,  
SWABERTO!

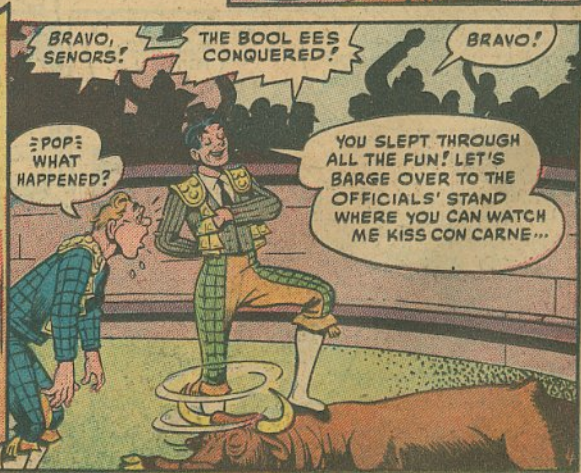
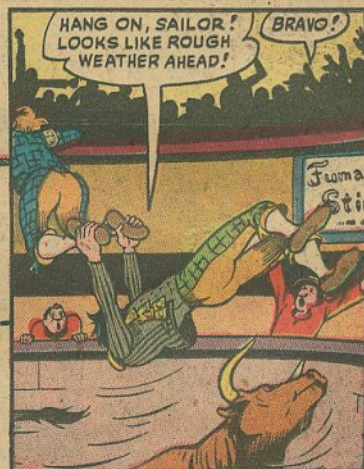
MEESED  
AGAIN!

SWABERTO ... HE  
EES AN ARTEEST!

BRAVO!

ZZZZ ...  
SOMEONE  
SHOW ME  
MY SACK ...  
ZZZZ!











# Dark River Rising

## With River Raging

THE man in the fancy frock coat stood knee deep in dark, oily water. Around him the rising flood of the Mississippi rolled between far banks, and above him the dark clouds poured their endless torrents into the flood. The man's handsome, expensive coat and his frilled shirt and doeskin britches were soaked and ruined, yet he smiled beneath his elegant mustaches and waited patiently as the rising river came to his knees, his thighs and, at last, to his waist.

It was almost nightfall when he saw the river boat through the curtain of rain. He waited until the big side-wheeler was almost abreast and began to shout, "Ahoy, Paragon! Take me aboard!"

The big boat snorted and its paddles lashed the water to foam. On the texas, Captain Pelham stood beside Jeb Rivers and Catfish as the crew put out a plank and took the sodden refugee aboard. A few moments later they faced the stranger.

"My name's Harris," he said, smiling, "and I appreciate your picking me up. I might as well tell you, I'm a gambler. The Lady of Natchez has an aversion to gamblers. When they found out my profession, they kicked me out on that sandbar and left me marooned. I have the money to pay my passage to New Orleans."

Captain Pelham scowled. "There'll be no gambling on my boat, but I'll not leave a wayfarer to perish in the flood. You may have passage to New Orleans. This is Jeb Rivers, my pilot, and his young friend, Catfish. They'll see that you're given a berth."

Young Jeb Rivers, veteran of the Mississippi in all its moods and aspects, opened his mouth as if to protest and then closed it again. As soon as he had shown the gambler to his berth, he and Catfish went below for their supper. Jeb had little to say. He seemed thoughtful, almost moody. Catfish, who knew his friend and guardian in all his moods, respected that silence. Jeb had something on his mind, and ten to one it was something that boded no good for somebody.

Shortly before dark the Paragon tied up in a protected eddy of the river to spend its night where floating logs and snags could not reach it. Soon after that the gambler who called

himself Harris, slipped from his cabin. He looked around, found the ornate corridor empty and made his way deep into the forward hold with a craft that spoke of long familiarity with river steamboats.

"The fools," the man said aloud as he knelt over the planking of the steamboat's bottom. "They swallowed the whole story, hook, line and sinker."

From beneath the water-soaked coat he took a brace and a wide bit. On his knees, he began to drill an inch-wide hole in the bottom of the Paragon. "A few holes and she'll begin to settle. They'll notice it around midnight and then it will be too late. The only thing they can do is abandon ship—right into the arms of my lads who'll be waiting to shut their noisy mouths forever, and then come aboard to loot to their heart's content before the old hulk goes down."

He made two or three swings with the brace and bit and then froze. From the shadows, the voice of Jeb Rivers said softly, "It was a nice try, Pirate, but you made too many mistakes."

The man whirled, flinging aside the brace and bit, snarling as he snatched a derringer pistol from his waistcoat. But Jeb was as swift as a catamount, and as deadly. He surged forward and drove the pirate to the floor, his fists working like pistons. The derringer exploded harmlessly into the planking. There was a brief, deadly struggle and then Jeb stood up over the limp, motionless figure of his opponent.

At that moment Catfish burst in with Captain Pelham. As they gaped, Jeb recovered his lost hat and grinned at them. "I think you can lock up this river pirate, Cap'n. He's looted his last boat. He aimed to drill holes in your bottom and start you sinking where his pirate crew was waiting to swarm aboard for looting." He smiled at Captain Pelham's amazement. "He said the Lady of Natchez put him on that bar, but she draws too much water to get close. That's one of the few permanent sandbars in the river, Cap'n. Every pilot knows it—and every pirate. Since this fellow wasn't a pilot, I guessed he was a pirate and sort of kept an eye on him."

"That's Jeb Rivers," Catfish cut in proudly. "When he's around, nobody can get by with anything."



# BETTY BATES



EARLY MORNING IN THE OFFICE OF BETTY BATES, DISTRICT ATTORNEY...

HAVE A HEART, BETTY! AS A POLICE REPORTER I GO OUT ON PLENTY OF TOUGH, DANGEROUS CASES! I NEED A GUN TO PROTECT MYSELF!

NONSENSE! YOU'D BE MORE LIKELY TO SHOOT YOURSELF THAN THE TARGET!

I WAS A CRACK SHOT ON THE COLLEGE RIFLE TEAM! COME ON, BETTY! OKAY MY APPLICATION FOR A GUN PERMIT!

NOTHING DOING, LARRY.... SAY! HERE'S AN INTERESTING ITEM IN THE MORNING MAIL!





A LETTER FROM GREVILLE NASH! SAYS THAT HE IS IN GREAT DANGER! WANTS TO SEE ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

GREVILLE NASH? ISN'T HE THE GREAT BOOK COLLECTOR?



RIGHT! THEY SAY HE'S GOT A LIBRARY WORTH NEARLY HALF A MILLION DOLLARS! PERHAPS I'D BETTER DRIVE OVER TO HIS PLACE RIGHT AWAY!

YOUR CHAUFFEUR AWAITS YOU, MA'AM!



THAT'S GREVILLE NASH'S JOINT! REAL PLUSH, BETTY! HIS FAMILY IS THE KIND THAT'S BEEN PACKING IT AWAY IN VAULTS FOR GENERATIONS!

IT'S NO WONDER HE CAN AFFORD TO INDULGE HIS PASSION FOR RARE BOOKS!



MEANWHILE, IN THE NASH MANSION...

A GENUINE FOLIO EDITION OF BEN JONSON'S 'VOLPONE'! IT WILL MAKE A WONDERFUL ADDITION TO MY LIBRARY!



WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? I DIDN'T ASK YOU TO COME! GET OUT BEFORE I...

DON'T THREATEN ME, NASH!



I HATE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THREATS! IT'S SUCH AN IDLE PASTIME! I ALWAYS PREFER TO ACT!

BANG!



DID YOU HEAR THAT, BETTY?

I SURE DID! IT WAS A SHOT!









**MOMENTS LATER...**

I HATE TO ASK THE USUAL THING! BUT WHAT HAPPENED? I THOUGHT I WAS DOING FINE BEFORE THE LIGHTS BLEW OUT!

THE KILLER HAD A PARTNER LURKING AROUND! HE GRABBED MY GUN AND REALLY PUT IT TO WORK ON YOU! I WAS AFRAID HE FRACTURED YOUR SKULL!



THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD POINT AT WHICH TO ASK YOU TO RECONSIDER GRANTING ME THAT GUN PERMIT! IT WOULD HAVE SAVED US A LOT OF GRIEF!

MAYBE!



WE'VE GOT A MURDER CASE ON OUR HANDS! I'LL CALL THE CORONER!

AND I'LL CALL MY NEWSPAPER! I'LL SAY THIS MUCH FOR YOU, BETTY! HANGING AROUND YOUR OFFICE IS ALWAYS GOOD FOR HEADLINES!



**ONE HOUR LATER...**

YOU'VE BEEN VERY HELPFUL! THAT WILL BE ALL FOR NOW! DON'T GO TOO FAR AWAY! I MAY NEED YOU FOR FURTHER QUESTIONING!

YES, MISS BATES!



HOW'D YOU MAKE OUT ON THE HOUSEHOLD HELP QUIZ?

I TURNED UP A FEW PUZZLING ANGLES! SEEMS THAT GREVILLE NASH WASN'T AS WEALTHY AS HE APPEARED TO BE! THE FACT IS HE WAS PRETTY NEARLY BANKRUPT!

WHE-EW! THAT IS NEWS!



THIS WHOLE SET-UP IS MOSTLY FRONT! HE HAD ONLY A FEW SERVANTS TO KEEP UP THE PLACE, AND HE COULDN'T PAY A LOT OF THE BILLS! BUT HE STILL INDULGED HIS HOBBY OF COLLECTING RARE BOOKS!



APPARENTLY THAT'S WHAT THE KILLERS WERE AFTER! THEY GOT AWAY WITH A COPY OF THOMAS BROWNE'S 'URN BURIAL' OUT OF THIS CRATE OF RECENTLY DELIVERED FIRST EDITIONS!

PRETTY DISCRIMINATING KILLERS, EH, BETTY?





AS A MATTER OF FACT, THEY WEREN'T! 'URN BURIAL' IS ONLY WORTH A COUPLE OF HUNDRED DOLLARS! ACCORDING TO THE BILL OF LADING, ANY OF THE OTHER BOOKS IN THIS CASE IS WORTH TWENTY TIMES THAT SUM!

JUST SHOWS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CROOKS DON'T GET AN EDUCATION!



NO, LARRY, I THINK THOSE MEN WERE AFTER 'URN BURIAL'—AND THEY GOT IT! BUT WHY SHOULD THEY CHOOSE THAT PARTICULAR VOLUME?

HONEY, THAT'S THE SIXTY-FOUR DOLLAR QUESTION! YOU DO THE BRAINWORK! THAT'S WHAT THE CITY PAYS YOU FOR!



HMMM! A NOTE IN GREVILLE NASH'S HAND-WRITING! MUST HAVE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT FROM THE WAY HE UNDERLINED IT! THAT'S THE TITLE OF A FAMOUS HISTORY BOOK!



A QUICK SEARCH THROUGH THE SHELVES OF RARE BOOKS DISCLOSES...

GOLLY! GIBBON'S 'DECLINE AND FALL' IS A DUMMY VOLUME, AND IT'S LOADED WITH A FORTUNE IN UN-CUT DIAMONDS!



WHAT A HOARD! I THOUGHT YOU SAID GREVILLE NASH WAS BROKE!

IT'S STARTING TO ADD UP NOW, LARRY! SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT THE MEN WHO KILLED NASH WILL BE BACK! AND THIS TIME I'LL BE READY FOR THEM!

MIDNIGHT...



GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN! I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU TO PAY A RETURN VISIT! I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!

WHERE'D HE PUT THE STUFF?



RIGHT HERE! LOOKS LIKE GREVILLE NASH HELD OUT ON YOU BOYS FOR QUITE A WHILE! HE COULDN'T HAVE PUT BY A FORTUNE IN DIAMONDS LIKE THESE FROM JUST ONE SHIPMENT!





BUT THAT'S WHY YOU WERE ANGRY WITH HIM, WASN'T IT? HE WAS ACTING AS A FRONT FOR A NEAT LITTLE SMUGGLING RACKET! NO ONE WOULD SUSPECT GREVILLE NASH OF SMUGGLING DIAMONDS INTO THIS COUNTRY IN THE BINDING OF HIS RARE IMPORTED BOOKS!



BUT THEN NASH GOT IDEAS! HE DIDN'T TURN OVER ALL THE DIAMONDS TO YOU! WHEN YOU FOUND OUT, YOU DECIDED TO KILL HIM! YOU DIDN'T KNOW HE'D ALREADY REMOVED THE LATEST SHIPMENT FROM THE BINDING ON THE COPY OF 'URN BURIAL' THAT YOU STOLE!



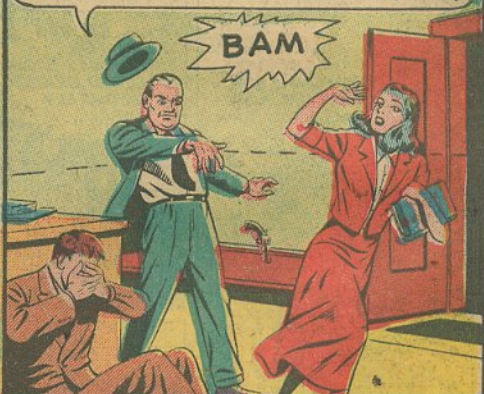
CUT THE SMALL TALK! HAND OVER THE...  
**EYOW!**

HERE THEY ARE!



YOU LITTLE DEVIL! I'LL BLAST... OWW!

**BAM**



GET YOUR HANDS UP! OR I'LL PUT THE NEXT BULLET IN A PLACE WHERE IT WILL DO THE MOST GOOD!

LARRY...DARLING! THANK GOODNESS YOU WEREN'T LYING ABOUT BEING A CRACK SHOT!



LATER, WHEN THE CASE OF THE DIAMOND SMUGGLERS IS OVER...

SO THEY'RE SELLING GREVILLE NASH'S ESTATE! I GUESS THIS IS WHAT HE TRIED TO FORESTALL WHEN HE WENT IN FOR SMUGGLING! BUT HE PLAYED IN A LEAGUE THAT WAS TOO FAST AND ROUGH FOR HIM!

HE KNEW HIS CRIMINAL PALS WERE AFTER HIM! THAT'S WHY HE WROTE TO YOU!



AREN'T YOU GLAD I WAS THOUGHTFUL ENOUGH TO BORROW YOUR GUN?

YOU EARNED THE PERMIT TO CARRY IT THE HARD WAY, LARRY, BY PROVING YOU KNEW HOW-- AND WHEN TO USE IT!





# "U.S." ROYAL

WITH HIS  
JET-PROPELLED BIKE



**SPOILING THE  
GANGSTERS' SCHEME**



THE STATE'S STAR WITNESS IS ON HIS WAY BY TRAIN TO SEND A VICIOUS GANG-LEADER UP THE RIVER--UNTIL THE GANGSTER'S MOB DECIDES TO SEND THE TRAIN INTO THE RIVER...

**BOOM!**

THERE GOES THE BRIDGE! TOO BAD WE CAN'T STICK AROUND TO WATCH THE BIG SPLASH!

BUT DEPUTY U.S. ROYAL AND THE ELM CITY BIKE CLUB BOYS ARE ON HAND WITH A FEW PLANS OF THEIR OWN!

BOYS, YOU TAG THEIR CAR WHILE I TRY TO HEAD OFF THE TRAIN... SHE'S DUE HERE IN 5 MINUTES!



THERE'S THE CONTROL STATION UP AHEAD... NOW IF THEY CAN JUST RADIO THE TRAIN ENGINEER IN TIME!

SOON, INSIDE THE CAB OF THE DOOMED TRAIN...

...ALL BRAKES DOWN FOR EMERGENCY STOP... WRECKED BRIDGE IMMEDIATELY AHEAD...

YOUR SPEED SAVED OUR LIVES, ROYAL!

WE CAUGHT THE GANGSTERS-- THANKS TO THE BOYS HERE TIPPING US OFF TO THEIR LICENSE NUMBER!

THEY MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT, TOO, IF WE ALL HADN'T BEEN RIDIN' ON U.S. ROYAL BIKE TIRES!

FELLAS, IF IT'S BIKE SPEED WITH SAFETY YOU'RE AFTER, INSIST ON U.S. ROYAL BIKE TIRES! THAT BUILT-IN SKID-CHAIN MEANS TOP CONTROL AT ALL TIMES!



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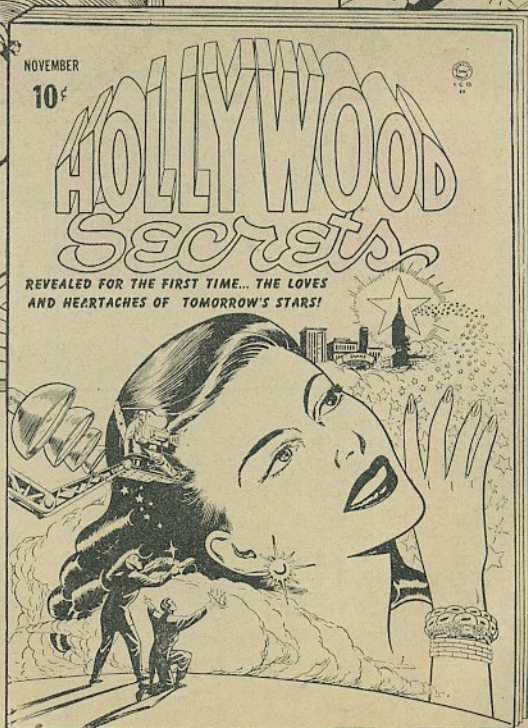
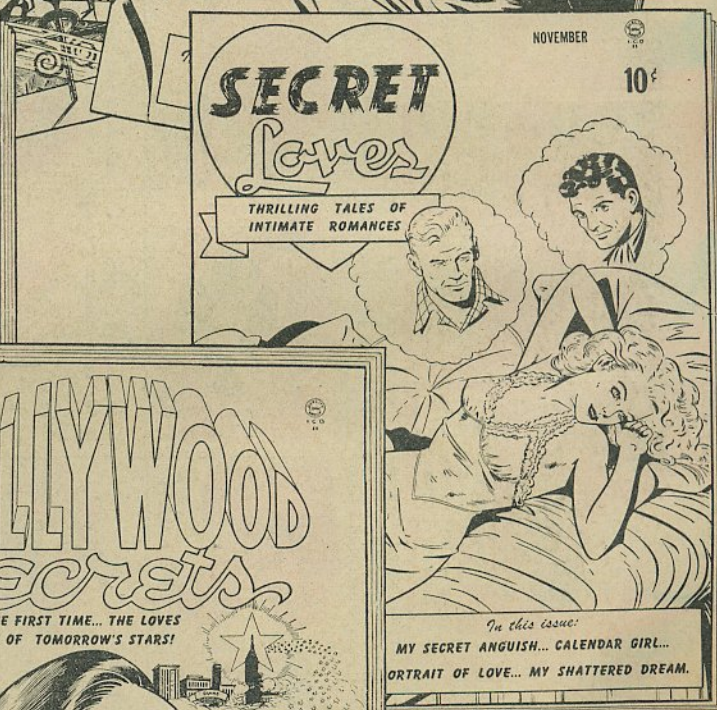
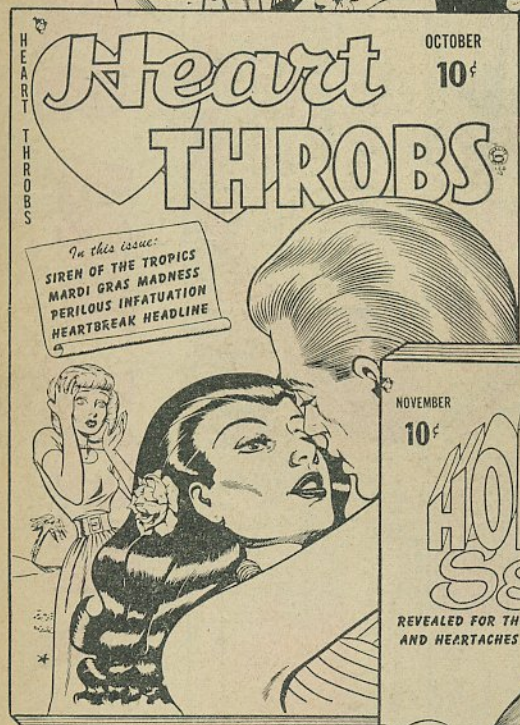


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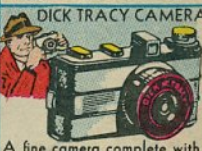
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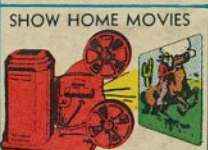
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IT DIDN'T? HOW COME?"

I SOLD XMAS PACKS TO MY FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS AT 10c EACH.

THAT SOUNDS EASY. HOW COULD I GET STARTED?"

JUST MAIL THE COUPON, SEND NO MONEY. THEY TRUST YOU.

GEE, IT REALLY WAS EASY. I OUR PRIZES CAME ALREADY.

"HERE IS A GIFT FOR YOU MOTHER."

LATER